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SUBJECT: SE GRATION SEES SLA/AW CAUTIOUS AND JEM INTRANSIGENT ON
DOHA PROCESS

REF: (A) NDJAMENA 267, (B) NDJAMENA 264

SUMMARY

1. (SBU) Darfur's rebel groups will continue to oppose the Doha process for different reasons, representatives from Sudan Liberation Army/Abdul Wahid (SLA/AW) and the Justice Equality Movement (JEM) told Special Envoy Gen. Scott Gration, separately, on May 27 in N'Djamena. SLA/AW's main commanders vowed they are committed to peace in Darfur, and the movement has formed a strategy committee to reach a consensus on negotiations and engagement with the international community. SLA/AW commanders reaffirmed to SE Gration that they would support a U.S.-led initiative and are interested in convening a wider SLA meeting in either Darfur or Juba. However, JEM sees the Government of Sudan (GOS) as a bad-faith negotiator, Suleiman Jamous told SE Gration, and the breakdown of the Doha talks has compelled JEM to continue its fight in Darfur. END SUMMARY.

SLA/AW WELCOMES SE'S EFFORTS

2. (SBU) SLA/AW rebel commanders told SE Gration on June 28 that their movement's strategic goal is building a sustainable peace in Darfur. Although the commanders remain steadfastly opposed to negotiations in Doha, they welcome the SE's attention to Darfur, and they will participate in any U.S. initiative that aims to bring peace to Darfur. The commanders quizzed SE Gration on what a non-Doha track of negotiations would look like, and said they would consider discussions in either Darfur or Juba. According to Nimir Mohamed, one of the movement's 20 commanders temporarily marooned in N'Djamena, SLA/AW commanders are in regular contact with rebels from other SLA movements, including Minni Minnawi and his commanders, and they would support any effort to reunite the scattered SLA factions. SLA/AW commanders see Khalil Ibrahim's Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) as a distinctly separate movement, but they recognize that JEM should be included in the Darfur peace process. Jaber Hasabala, a former colonel in the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and a member of the Zaghawa tribe, told SE Gration, "We can sit with JEM and talk about an alliance, but we won't combine our movements."

3. (SBU) In meetings with Abdul Wahid in May in Geneva, SLA/AW commanders successfully persuaded their chairman to form a 22-member strategy committee comprised of two commanders and 20 Darfur-based civilian leaders, according to what they told SE Gration on June 28.

The commanders were optimistic that within six months the committee would guide the movement towards peace negotiations and engagement with the international community. SE Gration counseled them that their committee would have to work faster, but the commanders said they intended to return to Jebel Marra soon and begin the committee's consultations with IDPs and SLA commanders. Regarding their erratic Parisian leader, Jaber Hasabala said, "Abdul Wahid cannot impose a decision on us. All the commanders will support the committee. Do not fear that Abdul Wahid would block anything." Silent through most of the meeting, SLA/AW Deputy Commander Terrada thanked SE Gration for his visit, and added, "You support us. This is our speech, and we would like all of us to collaborate and then go to peace."

JEM REMAINS INTRANSIGENT

14. (SBU) JEM will continue fighting against the GOS in Darfur, a cantankerous and argumentative Suleiman Jamous told SE Gration on June 28. Acting as JEM's Secretary of Humanitarian Affairs since April 2009, Jamous claimed that JEM now occupies significant territory in North Darfur, and has captured the hearts and minds of all Darfuris not aligned with the Khartoum regime. "There are only two groups of Darfuris, those who are with JEM and those who are with the government," he said. He also stated that other than the wounded in Amdjaras, they are not in Chad. The Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and JEM "must join forces to dismantle the center," according to Jamous, and JEM intends to use force to forge a "durable and respectful peace" in Darfur. Jamous accused his nephew Minni Minnawi of ambushing JEM forces in Um Barro in May prior to their assault of SAF garrisons in North Darfur, and he denied that JEM receives money or supplies from the Government of

NDJAMENA 00000269 002 OF 002

Chad. "We don't need their trucks, and they don't give us money," he said. When asked if JEM steals equipment in Darfur, Jamous boasted, "Stealing, no. Capturing, yes."

15. (SBU) The breakdown of the talks in Doha was "not our fault," Jamous said, and JEM will continue to view the GOS as a bad-faith negotiator as long as the international community cannot compel the regime to abide by the agreements it signs. Jamous insisted that the GOS undermined the Doha process by not releasing JEM prisoners immediately after the signing of the February 17 Agreement. (NOTE: JEM and the GOS did not agree to exchange prisoners as part of the February 17 Agreement. END NOTE.) After brushing aside SE Gration's counsel that peace in Darfur could be achieved before the end of the year, Jamous said that the international community must convince JEM not to return to conflict, and he offered no promises that the group would not begin fighting soon. After repeating that JEM intends to "dismantle" the GOS's grip on Darfur, Jamous vowed, "If you want to make peace in Darfur, it will be difficult without JEM." Jamous ended by saying that JEM would go back to Doha, but not before the Government of Sudan releases at least some JEM prisoners and allows humanitarian aid to reach the Darfuris who are out of reach and still suffering. SE Gration concluded the meeting by pressing JEM to, yet again, lay down its arms, become a political movement, and enter a new phase of inclusive peace talks based on the 2005 Declaration of Principles from Abuja.

16. (SBU) SE Gration cleared on this cable prior to its transmission.

17. (U) Minimize considered.

NIGRO